

IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

SPECIAL CIVIL APPLICATION No 1566 of 2000

For Approval and Signature:

Hon'ble MR.JUSTICE A.L.DAVE

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1. Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed : NO
to see the judgements?
2. To be referred to the Reporter or not? : NO
3. Whether Their Lordships wish to see the fair copy : NO
of the judgement?
4. Whether this case involves a substantial question : NO
of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution
of India, 1950 of any Order made thereunder?
5. Whether it is to be circulated to the Civil Judge? : NO

PAPPU @ NARENDRABHAI CHAITARAM GUPTA

Versus

STATE OF GUJARAT

Appearance:

MS SUBHADRA G PATEL for Petitioner

MR KT DAVE, AGP for Respondent No. 1, 2, 3

CORAM : MR.JUSTICE A.L.DAVE

Date of decision: 01/05/2000

ORAL JUDGEMENT

#. The petitioner - Pappu @ Narendrabhai Chetram Gupta,

has been detained under the provisions of the Gujarat Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act, 1985 ("PASA Act" for short) by virtue of an order passed by Commissioner of Police, Surat City, Surat, in exercise of powers under Section 3(1) of the PASA Act, dated December 30, 1999.

#. The grounds of detention indicate that the detaining authority took into consideration one prohibition offence registered against the petitioner. The detaining authority also took into consideration the statements of two anonymous witnesses in respect of two incidents that occurred on November 25, 1999 and December 11, 1999 and came to conclusion that the petitioner is a "bootlegger", that his activities are detrimental to public order, that fear expressed by the witnesses qua the petitioner was genuine and therefore, powers under section 9(2) of the PASA Act were exercised by the detaining authority by not disclosing identity of these witnesses.

#. The petitioner has challenged this order of detention on various counts. However, learned advocate for the petitioner has restricted his arguments to the fact that the subjective satisfaction recorded by the detaining authority for the need for exercise of powers under Section 9(2) of the PASA Act, cannot be considered as genuine. In order to substantiate this submission, learned counsel submitted that the statements of two anonymous witnesses were recorded on December 22, 1999 and December 23, 1999, which were verified by the detaining authority on December 29, 1999 and the order of detention is passed on 30th December, 1999. Learned counsel submitted, therefore, that there was no time for the detaining authority to give consideration to the aspect of correctness and genuineness of the facts stated by the witnesses and the fear expressed by the witnesses, respectively, in their statements. The exercise of powers under Section 9(2) of the PASA Act is improper and has resulted into denial of right of making an effective representation as contemplated under Article 22 (5) of the Constitution. Learned counsel for the petitioner therefore, submitted that, in light of the decision of a Division Bench of this Court in the case of Kalidas Chandubhai Kahar v. State of Gujarat & Ors. 1993 (2) GLR 1659, this petition may be allowed.

#. Mr. K.T. Dave, learned AGP has opposed this petition.

#. It is clear from the grounds of detention that the detaining authority has taken into consideration the

statements of two anonymous witnesses. The authority came to a conclusion that the fear expressed by these witnesses is correct and genuine and, therefore, the authority exercised powers under Section 9(2) of the PASA Act by not disclosing the identity of the witnesses. This Court is at loss to appreciate how the detaining authority could have arrived at this conclusion in such short spell. The detaining authority has not filed any affidavit-in-reply. It is, therefore, not possible to know as to what were the factors and material considered by the detaining authority besides the statements of the anonymous witnesses to come to conclusion that the fear expressed by the witnesses was genuine, that the incidents stated by the witnesses were correct and that there was need for exercise of powers under Section 9(2) of the PASA Act.

#. Similar such situation arose before a Division Bench of this Court in the case of Kalidas Chandubhai Kahar (supra), where the statements were verified on 16th October, 1992 and the order was passed on 17th October, 1992 and the Division Bench said that exercise of powers under Section 9(2) of the PASA Act was improper. This improper exercise of powers under Section 9(2) of the PASA Act was held to be detrimental to the right of the detainee of making an effective representation contemplated under Article 22(5) of the Constitution. The order of detention was, therefore, quashed. The facts of the present case squarely fall in line with the facts of that case. The order of detention, therefore stands vitiated in the instant case as well and the petition deserves to be allowed on this count alone.

#. So far as the registered offence is concerned, attention of this Court is drawn to the fact that some of the documents supplied to the detainee are not legible. Copy of the bail order in respect of the registered offence supplied to the detainee is alleged to be not legible. This Court has examined that document so also the learned AGP Mr. K.T. Dave and the contention raised in this regard requires acceptance factually. Therefore, the right of the detainee of making an effective representation is adversely affected. The petition, therefore, deserves to be allowed.

#. The petition is allowed. The impugned order of detention dated December 30, 1999 is hereby quashed and set aside and the detainee - Pappu @ Narendrabhai Chetram Gupta is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if not required in any other matter. Rule is made absolute with no order as to costs.

[A.L. DAVE, J.]

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